

Salamander by ZJpotter

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Summary:

“He’s in there,” Lucas says tapping the side of the glass.

They all watch, looking with wide eyes into the box. And there it is. It crawls out on four legs, all back with yellow spots all the way down its body. It stops and tilts his head up to look at them.

For a few seconds it’s silent. Mike wonders if everyone else is getting flashbacks from when Dustin showed them his “new pet”.

Salamander

Author's Note:

I never meant to post Stranger Things fan-fiction but here we are! I hope you enjoy.

“So why are we here exactly?”

“Yeah man I was supposed to feed the cat.”

Four pairs of eyes stare at Lucas Sinclair in curiosity as to why they are at the back of the school on a Saturday. Schools and Saturdays simply do not mix (unless the world was in danger then this rule has exceptions).

In response, Lucas removes his hands from behind his back. He holds a glass terrarium filled with grass and sticks and rocks and other things he probably found outside. He looks down at it, nods to himself, and thrusts it in the direction of Dustin.

Dustin looks at it in confusion, “What am I supposed to do with that?”

Lucas refrains from rolling his eyes, shifting his weight a bit, “It’s for you. It’s like a peace treaty.”

“We made up already,” is Dustin’s still confused reply.

“Yeah, but,” Lucas trails off a bit and Mike can tell whatever he’s about to say is going to be related to The Mind Flayer.

He takes on a whole other tone when he does that, they all do. The air gets thicker until it separates them in a bubble from everyone else in Hawkins. Their voices get quieter as if it could still hear them.

It can’t.

“I feel bad,” Lucas says.

Max leans over Dustin’s shoulder to peer in the box, “There’s nothing

in there.”

Mike doesn't know when Max officially became part of the party. If he had his way, she wouldn't be. The party would be as it has always been including El. At this point however, Max just knew way too much. It would be just cruel to leave her to deal with the aftermath of the craziness alone.

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“Is that a lizard?” Max asks.

“Salamander,” Will corrects.

Everyone lets out a breath of relief.

“I know Dart was your friend,” Lucas said, “despite him turning out to be a Demogorgon.”

“Demodog,” Dustin says which earns him a look from Lucas and a hit on the arm from Max.

Dustin takes the terrarium from Lucas bringing it up to eye level.

“Hey little guy,” he says smiling.

The salamander looks at him and then inspects the rest of its surroundings.

“I think he likes me,” Dustin said.

“What are you gonna name him?” Will asks.

There's a beat.

“Luke.”

“As in Skywalker?” Max asks.

“You know Star Wars?” Mike can practically see Lucas’ eyes turn into stars.

“Yeah, who doesn’t?”

“Wait, you mean to tell me all this time you liked Star Wars and didn’t tell us?” Dustin asks.

“Was I supposed to say something?”

“We have to watch them with you,” Will’s smiling now.

“Mike’s house 5:30?” Dustin asks.

“What? You can’t just do that!” Mike speaks up for the first time since they arrived.

They all look at him.

“Why not we do it all the time?” Dustin asks.

“Because...” Mike falters.

Because she's different? Because she's not one of us? There is no logical answer. Nothing that he can fabricate that won't sound like an excuse. They meet at his house all the time without a plan.

“Because you have Luke to take care of,” Mike says instead.

“How about tomorrow then?” Lucas asks.

“Mom makes good popcorn.” Will says.

“We’re going to have to sneak Max out.”

"And maybe Will too."

“Wheelers house at seven,” Dustin says.

“It’s a school night, Mom will never let you come over that late,” Mike argues.

Max shrugs, "We move it to six."

And somehow it's settled. They'll be watching Star Wars in the Wheeler's basement Sunday evening with a bowl of popcorn and Luke the Salamander between them. Dustin will be grinning and Lucas and Will will be laughing at Max as she imitates Luke staring into the two sunned sky of Tatooine.

Until then, they sit on the ground outside Hawkins Middle School, circled around a small black Salamander named Luke. It crawls on the ground and over beat up sneakers and on eager hands.

Will is grinning and Dustin is set on building an obstacle course for the amphibian to go through. Lucas and Max are off searching around for materials, occasionally throwing sticks at each other.

Mike thinks-Mike knows school and Saturdays do not mix(unless the world is ending). Weekends are for campaigns and searching Nancy's drawers for arcade money.

Except when he looks at his friends, an almost-party member, and a salamander, he thinks they aren't so bad together after all.